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Two Nature Trail Health and Rehab Staff Members Named Among Top Caregivers in the U.S.***Susie Williams and Sheila Stuckey Honored with National Awards***

MOUNT VERNON, Ill. (July 8, 2026) – By acing two prestigious national competitions, [Nature Trail Health and Rehab Center](#)’s CEO/Administrator Susie Williams and Certified Nursing Assistant Sheila Stuckey carried home two separate national honors that named them as among the best skilled nursing caregivers in the country.

Williams was named a winner in the McKnight’s “[Women of Distinction](#)” program as a Veteran VIP winner, recognizing skilled nursing leadership. Stuckey earned a [Frontline Honors Award](#) as one of the top hands-on skilled nursing caregivers in the country. Each contest draws entries from across the U.S.

Williams As A “Woman of Distinction”

The McKnight’s Women of Distinction awards program – a joint venture of skilled nursing publications *McKnight’s Long-Term Care News*, *McKnight’s Senior Living*, and *McKnight’s Home Care* – recognizes women making a significant impact in long-term care.

Williams was named a “Veteran VIP” winner in the Women of Distinction competition. This designation honors women with more than 15 years of experience who have made substantial contributions to skilled nursing, senior living, and home care. A Veteran VIP has demonstrated an exceptional commitment at the community or corporate level.

As a 34-year veteran of Nature Trail, throughout Williams’ tenure she has forged strong relationships with residents and staff. “I am a caregiver by nature,” she said, noting that even as a young student, “I loved visiting nursing homes and being able to help residents and their families.”

Williams is gratified by the loyalty and affection of residents and their families. “You gain lifetime friendships and continue to check up on each other,” she said. “I can tell you

numerous things about all of my residents. Every manager should know at least one or two things about each resident.”

Williams has a genuine love for the elderly. She wants them to spend their time at her facility with dignity, “and it’s an honor to be a part of that.” She also realized early that the staff is the backbone of each facility and wanted to be part of their lives – to know what was going on in their worlds. “They are a family. When there’s a crisis, everybody comes out to help, whether it’s making beds or being housekeepers. We do life together,” she added.

Stuckey Earns “Frontline Honors”

To become a Frontline Honoree, an individual is nominated by their peers. Skilled nursing honorees are recognized for their leadership within the skilled nursing industry.

Stuckey was bestowed with a Frontline Honors Award for her exemplary character and performance directly working with skilled nursing residents. The award also recognizes innovators, service champions, and those leading the care experience in skilled nursing and senior care. The awards honor key contributions – not just as individuals, but as leaders for their industry.

Life is full of challenges, and Stuckey has faced many. Despite these personal tests, she has proven herself not only dependable and hardworking but intelligent, compassionate, and relentless in obtaining the best possible outcomes for her residents.

Stuckey – who has worked at Nature Trail since 1987 – is an advocate for her residents, from the moment she arrives on the floor till the time she leaves. She treats each resident as if they are family, and her honesty and unique ability to unravel and troubleshoot while finding solutions to problems is appreciated and respected by her colleagues.

“Everyone whom Sheila works with praises her ability to create an environment that is open and welcoming,” Williams added about her colleague. “She treats everyone equally and raises the level of care on whatever hall she works on, just by being herself.

Frontline Honors awards were presented by Aging Media Network, part of WTHH Healthcare – a national healthcare media and events organization that covers skilled nursing and other caregiving industries – along with its publication *Skilled Nursing News*. Nominations from local, regional, and national companies make the Frontline Honors a key benchmark for care delivery standards.

About Nature Trail Health and Rehab Center

Nature Trail Health and Rehab Center is a 74-bed subacute and skilled nursing facility in Mount Vernon, Ill., providing long-term care, short-term care, rehabilitation, occupational therapy, physical therapy, rehab-to-home, speech therapy, hospice care,

and respite care. The facility also provides in-house counseling; an in-house psych nurse consultant; in-house dental, vision and podiatry services; and more.

Nature Trail offers VA-contracted services at an all-inclusive rate, including medication and therapy, for those vets 70%-plus service-connected, and VA services for those not service-connected and approved. Nature Trail is hiring: www.naturetrailhrc.com/careers. The center is currently accepting new admissions for short-term rehabilitation and long-term care. For further information, please contact (618) 242-5700 or visit the Nature Trail Health and Rehab Center website at www.naturetrailhrc.com.

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Photo caption:

Nature Trail Health and Rehab Center CEO/Administrator Susie Williams (top) and Certified Nursing Assistant Sheila Stuckey (bottom) won national awards naming them as among the top caregivers in the U.S. for their exemplary service to the skilled nursing profession.